2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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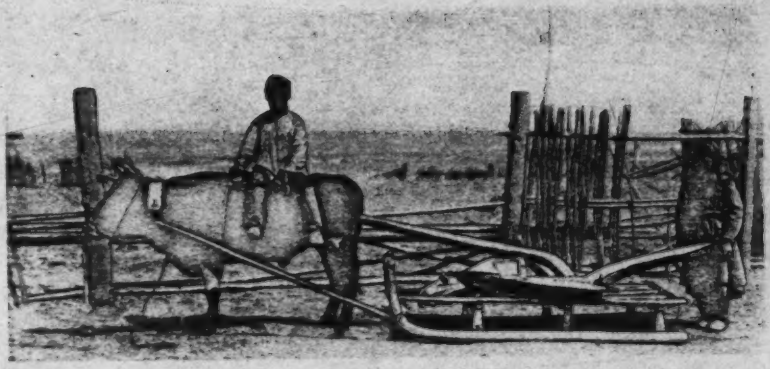

a

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Fig. 77. Yakut Agriculture and Methods of Transportation. *a*, A Yakut man and woman transporting a plow on an ox-drawn sledge; *b*, A Yakut man and woman plowing.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

Fig. 77*a* shows a Yakut man and woman transporting a Yakut plow on an ox-drawn sledge. The method of plowing may be seen in Fig. 77*b*. A model of an ox sledge is illustrated in Fig. 78. Even in summer it is much easier to transport freight on sledges where there are no roads.

Transportation

Outside the City of Yakutsk, the use of the wheeled cart, adopted from the Russians, is very limited throughout the Province. Roads suitable for wheeled transport are rare. They extend only 1036 kilometers: from Yakutsk to Viliuisk (600 km.) and from Viliuisk to Suntar (436 km.). I myself had the opportunity to use a wheeled cart when traveling from Yakutsk about sixty miles to the east to the Churupcha settlement.

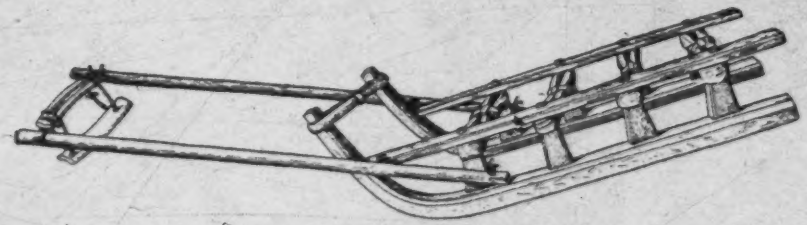

Fig. 78 (70-8832). Model of an Ox Sledge.

All the other roads are swampy and in summer were passable only on horseback; even this means of transportation is very difficult, particularly in the northern districts. In winter sledges are everywhere drawn by horses; in the northern districts reindeer and dogs are also used. Many Tungus, Lamut, and Yukaghir use the reindeer for riding, particularly in the mountainous districts between the great rivers. In summer small steamers ply the Lena and Viliui rivers. On the Yana, Indighirka, and Kolyma rivers and their tributaries large boats are used for carrying freight as well as for passengers. During the winter freight carried on pack-horses or by reindeer sledges from the shores of the Okhotsk Sea (Okhotsk, Yamsk, Ayan or Ola) over the mountains to the upper course of the Kolyma River, is floated down on pontoon-like rafts consisting of two large boats covered with a bridge. Such rafts are provided with a rudder and are propelled with long poles. As they cannot be poled up the river they are sold to the inhabitants of Nishne Kolymsk, who make boats of different sizes from them. Recently I learned that a steamer coming through Bering Strait now visits Nishne Kolymsk every summer, bringing flour and other commodities for sale or exchange for furs.

18: Priklonski--82 [6] E-5 (no date) 1891 Yakut
116, 493, 764, 767

After the corpse has been dressed it is taken away by the kjuvess (either alone or with the aid of companions) on a sledge. These wooden sledges, syyrgà as the Yakuts call them, are of the usual kind which is used to transport wood and other things needed in domestic life. No new sledge is made for this purpose. It must be borne in mind that vehicles on wheels have not been in use among the Yakuts until thirty or forty years ago, and the use of horses before a carriage is even more recent. In former times those who could not ride on horseback, e. g. children or sick persons, would move on a sledge drawn by an ox, through the whole year. It may be no more than fifteen years ago that noble Yakut women, paying visits to one another, still drove on peasants' sledges which were covered only with rugs, at summer time. The sledge driver rides on the ox, holding in his left hand a bridle to which a wooden ring is attached. The ring is fixed in the nostrils of the ox.

37: Dobell--345 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 241, 412, 493

"During our morning's ride I stopped to see the Yakuts mow grass, which they performed as a man might cut wood in other countries, swinging a short dull scythe above their heads, and literally hewing it down by main strength. Mowing is, properly, a work done by sleight, as well as by strength, with a long sharp scythe, that enables an expert hand to lay down a couple of acres of grass in a day: and this should be explained to them. I observed their hay was drawn home by oxen, yoked to sledges, nearly after the European manner. Their horned cattle, in general, though not remarkably tall, are large, strong, and well proportioned; but the cows do not give a great deal of milk. The cattle here were larger and better than immediately in the neighbourhood of Yakutsk."

/193 cont./

122 iron stove, which we should no longer need in the yurts, as well
123 as our supplies and kitchen utensils, we presented to our friendly hostess, who could make good use of them. She also wanted to keep our dog Waltusch, but we could not bear to leave our faithful companion on two such difficult expeditions here in this climate obviously unfavorable to him and carried out our resolve to take him back to Irkutsk to his well-earned rest. He is now living out the rest of his days in quiet contemplation with a butcher there. According to the custom of the country, Mrs. Rjeschétnikow insisted on giving us a present in return and provided us with some fine fish for the trip. In addition, Czekanowsky received a Russian-style fur cap, the crown of which was made of dark fox
[291] paws and the brim of river beaver. I was given a Jakut /Yakut/ fur hood, likewise of fox paws and lined with squirrel skins, and a pair of huge mittens of the same kind of fur, beautifully embroidered at the wrists and provided with an opening through which
[171] one could put out one's hand without taking off the mitten. This extremely practical mitten is found /194/ throughout northern Siberia and is to be recommended to European soldiers and hunters.

● 493 During the cold season persons of rank here travel in com-
[484] pletely covered narten /Russ. narta, "sled"/, into which one crawls
[554] from the front and then, wrapped in soft and warm skins and covers, sleeps through the entire journey. They are so low that sitting up is impossible, and, of course, it is equally impossible to see anything of the region through which one passes -- reason enough for us to forgo this comfort and be content with our narten used up to now, equipped only with a kibitka.

122 On the afternoon of November 5 we took cordial leave of Mrs.
[132] Rjeschétnikow and drove off in a northerly direction, with a temperature of about -33° R., which during the night even dropped to -38° R. On the way we visited the family of our guide Atschkássow, with whom we exchanged a few presents, and on the evening of the following day reached some yurts which bear the name Kŭssŭr /Kyusyur/ and lie on the right shore of the river, diagonally across from the larger village of Bulún, the chief place on the lower Lena. We chose to stop here because our

Y /194 cont./
122 route led toward the east again, and we therefore would have had to cross the Lena twice, the width of which scarcely exceeded two versts at this point -- it would have been no easy task, be-
T cause the ice cover consisted entirely of torössen (mountains of
Y blocks of ice pushed together), so that on the earlier journey we
[493] had avoided the river itself as much as possible. The Jakuten /Yakut/, by the way, have extraordinary skill in driving the narten; in spite of the route, frightful in places, I do not remember ever having an accident when a Jakute was driving for me, while with our Tungus an accident /195/ was inevitably connected with every spot that was even only moderately bad. -- In Küssür we found an excellent yurt consisting of several rooms and even equipped with a Russian stove, which belonged to the Ustjjansk /Ust-Yansk/ merchant, M. J. Ssánnikow. He annually brings his supply of mammoth tusks to Jakutsk /Yakutsk/, from where he brings his wares here by water in the fall and then returns to Ustjjansk with the opening of sled travel.

Scarcely had the news of our arrival spread in Bulún when more dignitaries came to visit. The secretary of the upráwa /uprava/ arrived; he had already greeted us in Ssiktjach and then returned here to wait for the golowá and to ask him for further assistance for us. His position here is certainly very difficult, because he does not understand a word of the Jakut language, while the golowá and the other elders do not understand any Russian; for the time being a former merchant who spoke both languages was helping him. The secretary brought us an official document, which, he said, referred to our expedition -- this was not the case, however; it contained orders to the effect that if the Austrian expedition under Payer and Weyprecht should reach here, they were to be shown every hospitality and helped to go on. There were absolutely no orders concerning us, but we, of course, guarded against revealing this and let the secretary believe that ours was the expedition in question. Obviously here again it was negligence on the part of the Werchojansk /Verkhoyansk/ isprawnik /ispravnik/, who had not sent the orders of the governor general here. Soon the present golowá was announced, an impressive

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

with the toyons, particularly in the Olekminskiy Okrug, close to the ulusy associated with the Lena gold mines and those lying near the town of Yakutsk. The toyons sold butter, meat, hay and other agricultural products at these markets. 443

Commercial relations then began to develop within the actual Yakut ulusy. Forged objects had long been manufactured for purposes of sale, and there were cases in which wooden, bone and other articles were made to order. Products from cattle-breeding, hay, firewood and building materials were also often sold and bought; the products of hunting—furs—were almost universally sold. Nevertheless, the overall structure of the Yakut economy was still a subsistence one.

The division of labor within the family was traditional. Male and female occupations were sharply divided. Men and women looked after the stock but the former preferred to deal with horses (and even milk the mares), while women chiefly tended cattle. Everyone took part in the haymaking, but the mowing itself was a male occupation. Hunting and fishing were reserved for men. Woodworking, metalworking, and mammoth-ivory carving were male occupations, while the dressing of hide and fur, sewing clothes and footwear, making leather and clay vessels were reserved for women. Finally, it was the males who cut the timber and built the dwellings, while the women carried water, lit the fires and cooked the food. Hired workers, dependent poorer kinsmen, and, in ancient times, slaves in many cases performed both male and female tasks. 462 466

Means of Transportation

The ancient Yakut means of transportation were adapted to the barely passable taiga. Before the advent of the Russians, the Yakuts did not know of the wheeled carriage, and until very recently people in the more out of the way places had never seen wheels. Sledges and sledge harnesses were known; in the central regions the Yakut sledges were almost identical in shape to the Russian ones, but in the north they were straight-sided reindeer sledges. 493

In the old days, the Yakuts had their own particular type of sledge (silis syarga); the runners were not bent, but made of a piece of wood with a rootstock and had a slight natural curve. Yakut sledges are mentioned in 17th-century documents as a means of transportation. The most primitive form of harnessing was a strap attached to the saddle of a horse. In other cases shafts were used in the same way as the strap. Oxen were more often harnessed to sledges than horses. The ox was harnessed to shafts with a yoke; the Yakut yoke (*бурҕалдьы*, or *буулаҕа* and *суҕурдэр*) is made in two pieces, very different from the Russian or Ukrainian ox-yoke, and like the sledge was evidently indigenous in origin. The Yakuts travelled on the sledges, and sometimes still do, both in winter and summer. 492

A more typical means of transportation was the horse (used both for riding and carrying packs). The Yakut packsaddle, the base of which was two wooden boards secured together at an angle, is similar in shape to the type used by the South Siberian pastoralists. The same thing can more or less be said of the riding saddle, except that in the case of the Yakuts it is higher, broader and thicker. The saddle frame was usually made of wood; the high, wide saddlebow was usually reinforced at the front with a stamped silver plate with a forged hook in the center for the reins; the low back was also encased in silver. Silver ornaments, incidentally, are characteristic of a later period and the older saddles (from excavations) are not adorned with this metal. The saddle frame was covered with a 58

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Yakut sleigh.

Another means of overland transportation was the ski, which was lined underneath with horsehide and not reindeer suede. The Yakut boats were no different from the Tungus ones. They had a canoe (tyy) made of birch-bark or else flat-bottomed and made from planks. The larger vessel—the karbaz—had sails and was evidently borrowed from the Russians. [177]

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Settlements and Buildings

Until recently the Yakut settlements were very much scattered about. The prevalent type of populated point (yal) consisted of one, two or three yurts standing in a row; there were less than 20 people (according to the

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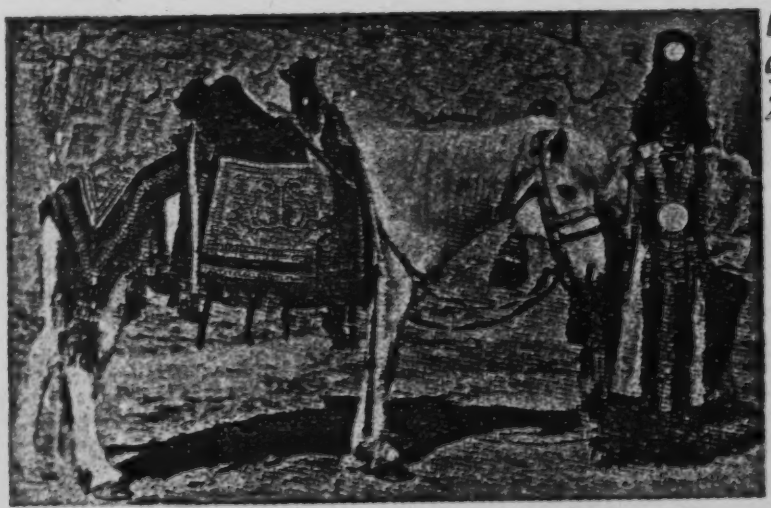

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Yakut woman with horse festively saddled.

233 together in pairs and thus obtains the equivalent of one pulley with
401 two large openings [Fig. 9m].

492 This method of harnessing the reindeer is quite convenient thanks to the system of pulleys: each of the reindeer pulls an equal share of the load, and a contributing factor here is the fact that going from right to left the reins of the reindeer get progressively shorter
[531] [Fig. 9A]. The ala strap and the girth of the dressharness are covered with red or green cloth and decorated with varicolored glass beads, or else the parts made of reindeer hide are decorated with designs sewn with thread made from reindeer tendons. The cargo harness is much simpler: it consists only of an ala strap, which is canvas for the most part (made from sacks), and there is no girth at all. Usually there is no halter either; the reindeer are tied by their necks to the back of the front sled. There are either two or four reindeer in a cargo team and when there are four each pair of them has only one neck-rope [Figs. 8C and 9N]. We think it is helpful to reproduce a special drawing [Fig. 10] in order to introduce a simplified description of the terms used by the local Russian speakers for the parts of the sled.

493 Reindeer sleds among the Dolgan can be separated into five types: 1) Bytej s'rga, or olok s'rga--the "covered" or light sled [Fig. 11]; 2) 'raak'--"iraka" in the local Russian pronunciation [Fig. 12]; 3) setii s'rga--the cargo sled, or the sled "which is lead" [Fig. 13]; 4) tard'' or turku--the cargo sled [Fig. 14]; and 5) turkucaaŋk', or little turku [Fig. 16].

[783] The "covered" sled is used exclusively for light riding; in the Noril'sk Rayon only the women ride on them--the men consider this a profanation for themselves, since after a trip on a female sled it would be necessary for them to cross over the path of the shaytany--the household spirits--or of a wild animal, which is considered to be unclean. In other regions this rule is not observed: there men too ride on "covered" sleds. The "covered" sled is distinguished by high legs forty-five to fifty centimeters long, of which there are five, eight, twelve, or fourteen on one sled. These legs are slanted toward the back of the sled, and they are mounted in such a way that they are farther apart from each other at the bottom than they are at the top [Fig. 10]. This is done so that the considerable height of the body of the sled will not make the whole sled unstable and allow it to turn over. Such a construction is also convenient in that it allows a person sitting in the sled to stand with his feet on the runners, which stick out beyond the line of the so-called "bayka," in

493 case this is necessary during the journey. The stems of these legs are left thicker for greater strength at those points where they pass the opening for the end of the towrope. The upper ends of these legs are stuck into special openings in the projecting cornice of the bayka. The bayka is made from the boards of a larch tree which has a bend at the root in the shape of a tube, as a result of which there is a high bend in the back part to which is fastened the narrow board called tyntyr--which forms the "heel" or "tundra"--by means of an insertion with a strap or by using wooden nails. The same kind of board is fastened on in the front, as a result of which the sled is accordingly called "covered." The runners are thin at their front part, which is bent; the back part, which is straight, gradually grows thicker, forming a beam with four smoothed angles, and the back ends of the runners are pointed. The thin front parts of the runners have thick places [195] [Figures 11, 12, and 13] with openings vertically--through which is passed the rope which fastens the outboard pulleys on--and horizontally--for the crosspiece, called tuoraj, which connects both runners in the front; and since there are two or three crosspieces on the fancy sleds, there are [196] accordingly as many openings in the runners. A board flooring, tied onto the frame with straps or nailed to the towropes of the supporting legs with wooden nails, forms the seat (olok).

The open sled, or iraka, a light male sled, is distinguished from the preceding type of sled by its shorter legs, two to six in number, and it does not have the "tundra," for which reason it is called open--ahagas s'rga; the bayka is made of two straight laths, and the legs are slanted only to a slight degree. In the other details of its construction this type of sled is no different from the "covered" sled.

A particular type of iraka with two legs is called sobgooldo by the Tungus. The legs do not slant but are exactly vertical. The sobgooldo are for riding, but especially for transporting boats, and [735] have no board flooring [Fig. 15]. The riding sobgooldo are not used [538] very often; usually poor people ride on them, and a sarcastic attitude toward them is found among the Dolgan. In the epos it is predominantly representatives of the evil spirits or heroes who are being ridiculed, who ride on a sobgooldo.

Both of the above-mentioned types of sleds keep their length constant when the number of legs on them is increased. Therefore, when the number of legs is increased, the distance between adjacent legs is decreased. The slant of the legs is a result of the fact that

493 the openings in the runners are made at an angle. The opening
2 in the front end of the runner which is used for the end of the bayka is also bored at an angle slanting upwards. If the legs were not slanted the sled would become rickety under the strain when the runners get wet through and tend to straighten out, thus pushing the frame of the sled back. The slanted opening for the end of the bayka serves to support the runners and keep them from straightening out. In order to prevent the runners from straightening out on the two-legged iraka, which has its legs sticking straight up, the openings for the ends of the bayka have a downward slant.

The setii s'rga--the cargo sled--is used during the winter nomadic trips. In its construction it is somewhat similar to the first type of sled, but is distinguished from the latter by its greater dimensions and its massiveness; in the front and back it has high "tundras," which also form something similar to a box into which even small objects can be put without fearing that they will fall out and get lost. The legs--which are still longer than those of the "covered" sled--are four or five in number; they are likewise slanted toward the back of the sled. Cargo sleds--or "koshovki," as they are called locally--are not used among the Dolgan; they are used exclusively for the transportation of loads by commercial organizations of the tundra. They are gotten ready in autumn in Dudinka; they may be as long as three meters, and have three short (twenty centimeters), broad legs, with a distance between them of from sixty to eighty centimeters. The runners are made broad or thin, with a bend almost at the front tip, and to avoid their straightening out they are usually hewn out of a tree with a natural curve at the root. The thin top ends of the legs have a semicircle cut out of them on the outboard side, in which is fixed a long thin stick which substitutes for the bayka.

493 The turkucaaak'--the little turku--is a light male sled, entirely
531 similar in type to the turku, but smaller in its dimensions; it is distinguished from the turku by the elegance of its trimming; by its high, decorated board back [Fig. 16]; by the netting made out of straps which is put along the sides of the sled so that things cannot fall out of the sled; and by the legs and runners, which are painted with brown ocher, with black graphite, or with dark blue or green paint which has been purchased; the sled has three or four short legs. The little turku is widespread beyond the Khatanga River among the Transtundra Yakut and is almost entirely absent in the west.

284 493 Although in the first three types of sleds the predominant means of holding the parts together is wooden nails, which have the advantage of not becoming fragile, as do iron nails in the intense cold, in the last two types all the separate parts are held together by means of straps.

233 492 493 To the front part of the setii s'rga, the turku, and the turkucaaŋk' is fastened a thick shaft-bow made of rose willow--the kab'rga, or "ram" ["male sheep"--Translator]. However, just as among the northern Yakut, among the Dolgan this does not serve as something to tie the rein to; the rein is passed through pulleys which are fastened directly to the crosspiece of the sled, and the rein passes [197] under the ram. This was explained as being due to the fact that if the reins are allowed to pass over the top of the ram they are high enough up in the air to rub sores on the legs of the reindeer, whereas the ram keeps the reins down low all the time; but such an explaination is not convincing to me personally. Thus, we see that the ram, having lost its main function as the shaft-bow by which the sled was pulled, among the Dolgan serves only as a "bumper" to prevent the sleds from breaking when they collide with trees. [Fig. 14] In the cargo harness, the rein is sometimes passed both above and below the ram, so that in case the pulley breaks the sled will not have to stop, since the reindeer can pull it by the ram.

233 284 492 A characteristic peculiarity of the winter harness for reindeer is the absence of knots, which are replaced by wooden buckles; these are quite convenient in severe cold, when the fingers become frostbitten after being exposed for a moment, and for this reason it is important that the shortest possible time be spent in harnessing up the team. If it should be necessary to tie knots in the reins, for example, the natives make knots which can be quickly untied [Fig. 9L]. [Fig. 15].

233 492 When the natives are riding in winter they urge the reindeer on with a stick about four meters long; they poke the end of the stick into the hind quarters of the reindeer, since, on account of its thick hair, the reindeer is completely insensitive to other methods of prodding. This stick--the kyrej, or "khorey" in Russian [Fig. 9h]--has on its top end a small bone circle to prevent the reindeer being pierced by the stick. On the lower end of the "khorey" is fixed an iron tip of a spear--the ynyy--with a blunt point [Fig. 9ee]. With this the front rider tests the thickness of the ice on rivers in the autumn to see whether the caravan can cross over them or not. This tip also enables the natives to poke the stick upright in the snow when

54: Popov--41 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan
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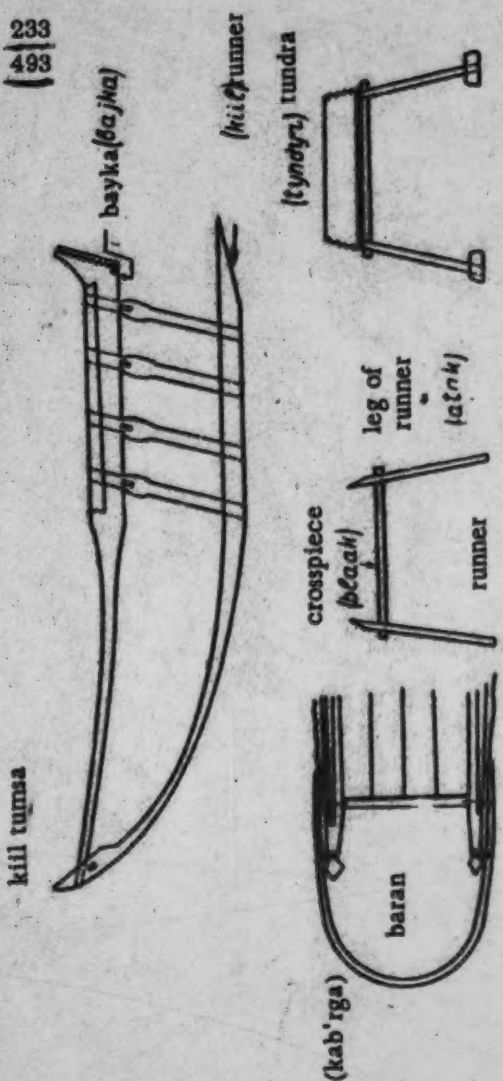


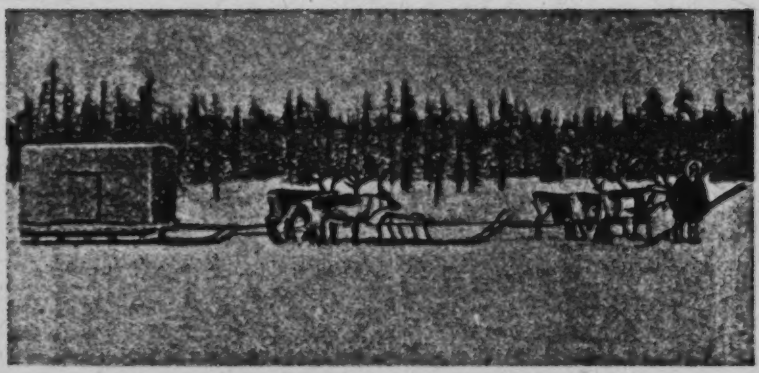
Fig. 10
Names of the parts of reindeer sleds

[facing p. 196]

Fig. 16

Light sled "turkucaank." Above -- decorated backs of sleds

55:Popov E-5 (no date) 1964 RV2 Yakut RV2
Dolgan



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Winter dwelling, sled tent.

There are more than a dozen versions of the Dolgan national costume, all with their special names, though only different in a few trivial details. The characteristic feature of both men's and women's clothing is a slightly elongated coattail at the back. The Dolgans themselves explain this by the fact that when sitting down on the cold ground in a tent they can spread out the long coattail underneath them. 291

Even before the Revolution household clothing for men and women was made of bought material. Men wore shirts and trousers of the Russian style, and women wore dresses, on top of which they put on aprons without openings. Both the men's shirts and the women's aprons almost always had side pockets and were embroidered with narrow colored piping and numerous buttons. They did not wear any underclothing. 291 177

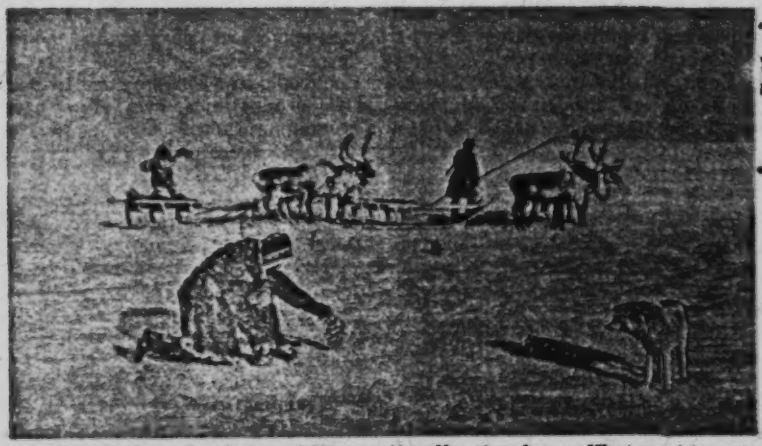
In the summer and winter men and women wore a cloth coat called the sontap. In the winter they wore a second fox-fur or hareskin coat beneath it. In the winter instead of the cloth coats they sometimes wore the deerskin open dokha (parka) or short coat, and ventless fur clothing with a hood with the fur outside, i.e., the sokuy. When traveling the men wore a sokuy over their cloth coat or deerskin parka. In rainy summer weather a cloth sokuy was put on. In the winter the women wore a son or long polar-fox or hareskin coat, on top of which they had a sontap or sangyyak (deerskin coat). Men and women girdled their clothing with bead-studded belts. The mukalkaan, a bead-embroidered men's parka, was close to the Even type. The old-fashioned men's and women's aprons were also similar to the Even type. Men's and women's hats (bergese) were shaped like hoods. The top was cut from fox feet or from cloth, and was embroidered with beads or finished with narrow bands of colored cloth. Winter footwear was made of deer feet and came in two types: a type reaching to the knee or higher, corresponding to the Evenk boot and often ornamented with beads. 291 [531]

Summer footwear was made of suede. A hole was made in the middle of the sole in summer footwear so that any water leaking inside during walking could run out.

Social Relations and Religion

By the time the Russians arrived, the Dolgans were splitting up into clans. Kinship was reckoned on the male side. There were certain traces 614 611

55:Popov E-5 (no date) 1964 RV2 Yakut RV2
Dolgan



Setting bait for foxes. "Victory" collective farm, Khatangskiy Rayon, Taymyr National Okrug.

become common. The art of dancing was practically unknown to the Dolgans. Like the Evenks, they only had rounds (with the refrain "kheyro") in which the men and women went round and round, leading each other by the arm and stamping on the ground.

The graphic art of the Dolgans was of an applied nature. Both festive and ordinary clothing was richly ornamented with beads or appliquéd with narrow strips of colored material. Patterned embroidery with deerhair on suede dyed red with an infusion of alder bark or ochre, or dyed black with graphite, was common. Also to be found was fine openwork embroidery with tendon thread on the straps and belts of the reindeer harness. Decorating the clothing was a job of the women. The men mainly engaged in mammoth-ivory carving. They acquired a particularly high degree of skill in carving cheek-plates for the reindeer halter. Tin-inlaid fronts for reindeer saddles and knife handles were also found. The smiths were considered to be very skilled at inlaying iron objects with copper and silver. The runners and backs of light, low sleds common in the Khatangskiy Rayon show an intriguing range of colors. Dolgan designs for the most part are geometric; they consist of combinations of crosses, semicircles, zigzags and broken lines. Wood-carving of a religious nature was also commonly found. The representations were usually very symbolic.

The Post-Revolutionary Period in the Life of the Dolgans

[In 1926, there were already 17 cooperative stores in the Dolgan territory. In 1931, the former clan Soviets were changed over and replaced by territorial nomadic Soviets, which went to make up the Taymyr Dolgan-Nennish National Okrug.

[Collectivization of the Dolgans was begun in 1930-31 and completed in 1938. The Dolgan collective farms have collectivized reindeer herds, lines of permanent polar-fox traps, supplies of portable steel springtraps, firearms for hunting and protection of the herds, seines and vertical nets, reindeer harness, sleds, buildings, and special Arctic clothing. The